



# The Return of Superman as Digital Fathering Learning Media in Early Childhood Education

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**Abstract.** The Return of Superman is one of the products of the South Korean state which is packaged through a television program that is a reality show featuring fathers' involvement in caring for, caring for, and educating early childhood without the help of wives and maids for 48 hours. These programs can be viewed via the YouTube page or application on the KBS World TV YouTube channel, which is currently popular ICT media. Based on this background, the research was conducted to know the program The Return of Superman as a digital fathering learning media in Early Childhood Education. To find out the results of the research objectives, this research was conducted using the phenomenological method with the observation technique of the Return of Superman episode 43 video as the object of research. Furthermore, the data were analyzed thematically. The results of the study show that the involvement of fathers who are part of informal education subjects in educating early childhood has a positive impact on various kinds of children's abilities shown in the video, so it can be concluded that The Return of Superman can be used as a choice of digital learning media to make it easier for teachers to provide innovative and creative understanding in the modern era by displaying it in video form.

**Keywords:** The Return of Superman, Learning of Media, Fathering, Early Childhood Education

## 1 Introduction

Korea is one of the East Asian countries that has achieved success in managing its culture through a unique and good marketing strategy so that the culture is different from other countries (1). This culture is known as the Korean Wave or Hallyu, which is a global phenomenon from the country of South Korea that introduces various kinds of culture through various kinds of products that spread quickly (2). South Korean cultural products spread rapidly and became the subject of the Korean Wave, starting with the fame of television dramas in several Asian countries, followed by popular music, also known as K-Pop, film and food, games, animation, variety shows, reality shows, and webtoons. In 2010 it spread worldwide from Asia to Europe and America (3,4).

In spreading South Korean culture, the use and utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) is the right decision because, through ICT, people can get information about what is happening in the world that is processed, packaged, and displayed until the information is distributed in the form of audio, visual, audio-visual and even multimedia using the internet network as a continuation of ICT development (5). The existence of the internet network has changed the paradigm of obtaining information and communication that is not limited by time and space so that it can be used multitasking to select information and communicate because it will affect one's perception of an understanding in the world (6–9).

Therefore, the South Korean government's decision to utilize and use ICT media in spreading Korean culture through ICT, namely digital media connected to the internet, is the right decision. One of the popular South Korean cultural products that can be accessed through digital media is the reality show, *The Return of Superman*. *The Return of Superman* is a variety show produced by the Korea Broadcasting System (KBS) in 2013 with the concept of a father who is given the task of looking after his children and carrying out various parenting and caring activities without the help of his wife and/or maid for 48 hours. This event aims to bring fathers closer to their children because fathers are seen as someone who rarely interact with their children because they are busy working (1,10,11). According to Iryanti (1), *The Return of Superman* is an effort to show that fathers can play a role in raising and doing household chores. From 2013 until now, the return of *Superman* program can be seen on the KBS World TV YouTube channel.

*The Return of Superman* describes and explains the father's involvement in raising early childhood aged zero to eight years (12). The involvement of fathers in raising children explains parenting patterns through parental interactions consisting of fathers, mothers, and children who are part of the narrow meaning of the family (13). The involvement of fathers and mothers in caring for and caring for early childhood is part of early childhood education with informal education channels by Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system. Informal education is provided by fathers and mothers to care for and train, look after, and educate children, so that fostering children in the family is a reflection of the responsibilities and roles of parents as first and foremost educators (14). After informal education, early childhood will continue their education in formal education, namely kindergarten. In formal education, the father and mother's duties do not stop, but the father and mother will work together to develop children's abilities at school and home. As for the involvement of fathers and mothers with the school, namely parenting activities. Parenting is an activity that can be created by parents and the school to develop various children's abilities optimally, especially at the early childhood education level (15). With this program, it can explain the paradigm that fathers can raise and care for children (16), but several studies that have been conducted reveal a paradigm for mothers that mothers play an important role in caring for and caring for children while the role of fathers is the breadwinner so they do not have time to raise and care for children (16–20). With this paradigm, the interaction time between father and child is less than that between mother and child (18).

Therefore, with the presence of The Return of Superman event program that can be accessed anywhere and anytime due to the ICT media involved, the event can provide a new paradigm for father involvement in early childhood education to provide care, training, and education through innovative learning media. Currently, digital media is an innovative media, because of its easy access, such as utilizing YouTube applications and/or websites, because the demands of the times that are entering the 4.0 revolution era require innovation in learning media (5). Therefore, The Return of Superman program can be used as digital media to gain knowledge about fathers' parenting patterns towards their children through videos that can be accessed on the YouTube page. Therefore, this study aims to determine The Return of Superman program as a digital fathering learning media in Early Childhood Education.

## 2 Method

This research focuses on The Return of Superman episode 43 with the title “The Neighborhood is Needed to Raise One Child” which was uploaded on the KBS World TV YouTube channel on September 28, 2014 (21), tells the views of 100 parents who invited to give their opinions on the broadcast of The Return of Superman which has been running for one year. Therefore the research method used on these data is phenomenological because it examines the essence of individual experience of this phenomenon (22,23).

Table 1. Coding Stages

Theme	Selective Coding	Axial Coding
The Return of Superman as a digital learning media for the concept of fathering	1. The Return of Superman is the best TV program	1. Coverage of Korean news stations
	2. The Return of Superman as digital learning media	2. Miracles in Korea
	3. Event program on father's involvement in parenting	3. Father's golden age in parenting
		4. The term Friendly (Friend and Daddy) is covered by TV stations
		5. The attitude of the father to invite children to do activities
		6. The best TV show program

## 3 Result and Discussion

Based on the results of the coding, it was concluded that the theme of this study was The Return of Superman as a digital learning medium for the concept of fathering in early childhood education. The explanation of the analysis is as follows: The Return

of Superman can be watched through the you tube application or website which can be accessed through ICT hardware such as laptops, smartphones, smart TVs, and tablets connected to the internet as a reality show program that displays real-life activities without engineering. The use of ICT media in this modern era is one of the learning media that supports easy and innovative learning because there are learning elements that combine images, videos, and sounds that aim to develop learning & innovation Skills-4Cs, namely critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration (24–26). This supports that The Return of Superman can be used as digital learning media because it meets the criteria of modern learning media, especially in the 21st century, which is innovative and creative, which can be used by people who live in the modern era or previously who have not used digital learning media much. After all, the access provided by KBS as the copyright owner of the show uploads the video recording on the youtube page or application. Using the YouTube application and website page, can affect 1) social integrity, when the subject can conclude what is seen and obtained after watching YouTube videos to feel the motivation to apply it in people's lives. 2) personal integrity, when the subject can control himself to improve himself against his shortcomings (27).

Therefore, The Return of Superman can be an option to be used as digital learning media, especially in parenting activities that can be carried out at the PAUD level, because at this level parents as children's first educators need to be involved in solving children's problems and developing children's abilities optimally both at home and at school (28,29). Parenting activities are the involvement of fathers and mothers in PAUD which is part of the educational path, namely informal education (14). Informal education has an attachment to PAUD, because the Early Childhood Education pathway involves fathers and mothers in helping and developing various kinds of children's abilities, considering that the family is the child's first educational environment based on pedagogic theory (30–32,14,33). The thing that needs to be considered in the informal education route is the role of parents consisting of fathers and mothers, but in parenting activities, the tendency for parents to participate in mothers, so mothers and educators tend to communicate about child development and educators feel it is enough to convey this information to mothers, without fathers knowing directly. Based on research conducted by Rohmalina et al (34) states that the low knowledge of PAUD educators on the dimensions of father involvement with the child's needs for the father's presence without direct interaction, so that it has an impact on adult communication in solving problems and developing early childhood abilities. Therefore, The Return of Superman can be used as a teacher's choice to provide information on the concept of father involvement in raising and caring for early childhood.

To support the above statement regarding The Return of Superman as a digital learning medium for the concept of Fathering in PAUD, the video recording of The Return of Superman episode 43 as a special episode to celebrate the first anniversary, shows a video stating that the event was covered by one of the program's news due to changes in attitudes between fathers and early childhood as shown in Figures 1 and 2. In Figure 1, the emergence of the term *friendy* which stands for *Friend and Daddy* is the task of the father as a playmate to become a friend (17). Apart from that, The Re-

turn of Superman provides an opportunity for fathers to communicate with children and play with children in their free time as described in Figure 2



Fig. 1. The Appearance of the Term Friendly in The Return of Superman Program



Fig. 2. Impact of The Return of Superman Program (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oo1T1bETkTE&t=1601s>)

The statement from one of the fathers who was invited to take part in the first anniversary of The Return of Superman by giving his opinion that this event is the best program is shown in Figure 3.



**Fig. 3.** One of the Fathers Gives Opinion on The Return of Superman (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oo1T1bETkTE&t=1601s>)

Therefore, it can be concluded that The Return of Superman is one of the best event programs that can change the parents' paradigm towards early childhood care and treatment. This can be seen from the period of airing starting from 2013 until now. The event program still exists to be watched and can even attract the attention of the millennial generation born in the 1980-2000 range (7) to learn about the role of mothers and fathers in providing education to children after an early age through caring and parenting activities, because of the emergence of South Korean public figures who are famous in their fields of work as entertainers such as singers, and actors and athletes.

Meanwhile, the video recording explains that with The Return of Superman as a variety show program, it is revealed that the program is an "unbelievable miracle of Korea" at 14.08 minutes which is explained in Figure 1, as follows:



This opened a new paradigm for South Korean society that fathers can care for and care for

children as a mother usually does. Even when the father is involved in raising the child, the abilities that the child has can develop optimally. As for abilities that can be developed when fathers are involved in parenting, namely, fathers can teach children to be disciplined, and become models for introducing sex and gender education(17,35). Meanwhile, children's language, cognitive, and social-emotional abilities can develop better if the father is present in childhood (16,36,37). This is supported by the ability to speak Korean from Sarang who is the son of a father named Choo Seung Hoon who is a South Korean citizen and Mrs. Yano Shiho who is a Japanese citizen. Because Sarang was born and grew up in Japan, Choo Seung Hoon taught Sarang to speak Korean with patience and care with collaborative language system for less barriers prevent these fathers from meaningfully engaging (38). At Sarang's early age, Sarang was able to communicate in Korean because daughters who have close, communicative, supportive relationships with their fathers throughout childhood have better (39,40) which was shown at 20.52 minutes, this can be seen in Figure 5, as follows:



**Fig. 4.** A narration of Choo Seung Hoon's Father's Wish to Communicate in Korean with Sarang

Based on the analysis of the research data, it can be concluded that The Return of Superman can be used as an option to be used as digital learning media, especially in parenting activities that can be carried out at the Early Childhood Education level with informal education channels, because at this level the father and mother are the first educators of children who need to be involved in solving children's problems and developing children's abilities optimally both in the home and school environment (32,29,41). Therefore, The Return of Superman can be used as a teacher's choice to provide information on the concept of the father's involvement in educating early childhood that is digital and makes it easier for teachers to provide understanding through videos as innovative media in today's modern

## 4 Conclusion

Based on the data analysis that has been done, The Return of Superman is the best program in providing information on the concept of fathering which is part of parenting, especially at the early childhood education level. The program can be used as a learning medium for parents and PAUD educators as a solution to problems that arise in children and to develop various kinds of children's abilities including cognitive, physical, language, and social-emotional abilities shown at the event. Meanwhile, watching the program can be accessed easily because KBS is the copyright owner of the program and the video footage has been uploaded on the YouTube page or application with the KBS World TV channel. By uploading these recorded videos, parents and educators as adults who live in the modern era can learn anywhere and anytime through ICT hardware connected to the internet which is part of life in the 21st century.

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